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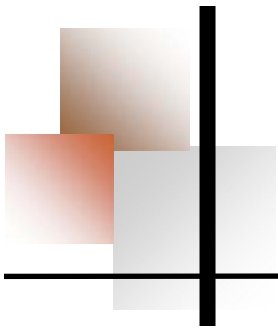
Master Plan for English Language Learners

Master Plan for English Language Learners

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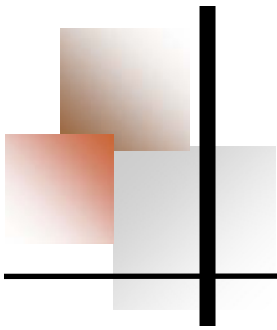
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Utah State Board of Education

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Provide leadership, vision, and advocacy, so that all students have educational opportunities to meet their potential and achieve competency.

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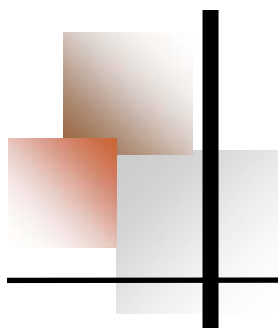**Twila B. Affleck — Secretary**

Table of Contents

Master Plan for English Language Learners

Introduction

The Master Plan for English Language Learners (ELLs) provides guidance to schools and districts to implement both recommendations and state requirements to improve student academic achievement and school success. Furthermore, it provides guidance and direction for policymakers' efforts to enact programs supporting the learning of ELLs and gain parent involvement.

The Master Plan for English Language Learners recognizes family literacy and parent involvement in the school as successful strategies to increase literacy skills and language gains in all ethnic groups of children. This Master Plan addresses the unique needs of our ELL families, which include cultural, educational, and language barriers.

Organization

The Master Plan for English Language Learners is divided into eight areas of focus:

- ☐ Goals for English Language Learners, Educators, and Families

- ☐ Classroom Environment, School Culture, and High Expectations for Every ELL

- ☐ Learning Models, Early Education, and Instruction

- ☐ Educator Quality

- ☐ Family Involvement in School

- ☐ Community Involvement

- ☐ Data Information and Program Effectiveness

- ☐ Alternative Language Services Guidance Document

Each area of focus is organized into sections that will benefit all students, families, educators and communities.

Goals for English Language Learners, Educators, and Families

Every ELL gains the knowledge, skills, and life skills to be a successful lifelong learner.

- Acquire basic and academic English language skills to become proficient learners.
- Understand content knowledge and skills in all academic areas and have access to opportunities to engage in the full curriculum provided by the school.
- Reflect on learning needs and communicate these needs to teachers and parents.
- Demonstrate proficiency on CRTs in math, language arts, and science, as well as other measures of learning.
- Gain the skills described in the Utah Life Skills document (e.g., thinking and reasoning, social and civic responsibility, character, aesthetics, communication, system skills, and employability), and become fully engaged community members.
- Graduate from high school at a rate commensurate with the general student population.
- Participate in post-secondary and higher education to obtain certifications and degrees at rates commensurate with the general population.

Every educator maintains high expectations for every ELL and establishes open communication among all stakeholders.

- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and respect for all cultural beliefs and values.
- Provide instruction in the Core Curriculum using best educational practices and cultural learning patterns that help students enjoy learning cultural differences and values.
- Monitor and provide accountability for successful individual student achievement.
- Communicate goals for and progress of ELLs frequently and clearly with all stakeholders.
- Provide opportunities for students and parents to communicate learning needs.

Every family of an ELL participates in school and student learning, and supports their student's pursuit of a quality education.

- Communicate the learning needs of their students with the school.
- Support school educational efforts and participate in parent-teacher-student conferences.
- Establish active, focused educational activities at home.
- Engage in reading with students.

Classroom Environment, School Culture, and High Expectations for Every English Language Learner

Schools create and maintain a positive school culture and classroom environments that facilitates successful student learning.

- Establish clear and high expectations for a positive learning environment in all schools (e.g., positive behavior supports, text-rich environments, clean and well organized classrooms).
- Work through accreditation, school improvement, and professional development to foster high learning expectations for every ELL.
- Establish programs to empower students with self-confidence to increase academic ability (e.g., Math, Engineering, Science, Achievement (MESA); summer programs; fine arts exhibitions; science fairs).
- Incorporate Utah Life Skills into every aspect of school culture and student achievement.
- Establish and support initiatives to lower class size for ELLs.
- Extend learning opportunities to include activities outside of the regular school schedule.
- Establish funding to support appropriate use of and access to technology for individualized learning, taking into account cultural differences and values.
- Encourage instructional strategies that engage students in classroom dialogue to share ideas and knowledge and promote higher-order thinking.
- Provide meaningful school activities that embrace students' cultures.
- Cultivate cultural proficiency through culturally responsive curriculum and instruction.
- Provide sheltered instruction for ELLs.
- Provide instruction that develops academic language for ELLs.
- Provide systemic comprehensive guidance tools for schools to communicate educational requirements (e.g., progress toward graduation, promotion to next grade level, attendance policies) for ELLs.

Learning Models, Early Education, and Instruction

Schools with ELLs implement programs to address the language and learning needs of each student.

Schools establish evidence-based instructional models that engage students in meaningful learning and improve achievement.

- Establish clear standards and expectations for appropriate instruction in English Language Acquisition classes.
- Provide models of quality academic language acquisition.
- Provide differentiated instruction to improve learning.
- Identify and appropriately address the content learning needs of ELLs across all classifications.
- Provide content-area teachers with professional development that enhances instruction of ELLs (e.g., sheltered instruction, tiered models).
- Utilize dual-language programs when appropriate.
- Communicate models of instruction used in each school to stakeholders.
- Provide culturally relevant textbooks, supplemental software and technology, and other instructional materials appropriate to the course and student needs.

Collaborate with all stakeholders to establish early education programs that meet the needs of ELLs.

- Establish and implement effective pre-K education programs to prepare ELLs for kindergarten.
- Establish extended-day kindergarten programs that support student academic English language acquisition.
- Communicate to all parents of ELLs the pre-K guidelines and expectations for school readiness.
- Support high-quality early childhood programs that contain the following components: early childhood-certificated staff; developmentally appropriate curriculum that addresses the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs of the child; and small class size.

Provide instruction that develops academic English language.

- Establish a coordinated effort to provide clear and high expectations for student achievement in the primary grades through adult education.
- Coordinate and implement the Utah Core Curriculum with the Utah ELL standards.
- Establish a coordinated effort to provide appropriate services to ELLs who have special needs.

Educator Quality

Districts and schools provide teachers of ELLs with the knowledge, skills, and credentials to ensure quality instruction.

- Require English Language Acquisition classes to be taught by teachers with English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsements.
- Provide teachers with professional development in sheltered instruction and effective teaching practices.
- Provide content-area teachers with professional development that expands their strategies for teaching ELLs academic English language.
- Provide support and training to administrators, counselors, paraprofessionals, and others who are integral to the education of ELLs.
- Provide professional development for all teachers, staff members, and administrators to develop cultural competency and culturally responsive teaching (e.g., REACH; *Teacher, They Called Me a_____!": Confronting Prejudice and Discrimination in the Classroom*).
- Engage educators in reflection and dialogue to attain cultural proficiency.
- Incorporate performance indicators for instruction of ELLs into the standard teacher evaluation protocols.
- Ensure that every ELL receives instruction from highly qualified teachers.
- Provide an ESL endorsement program that is consistent, rigorous, and research-based to comply with state requirements for teachers to gain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach ELLs.
- Communicate licensing and endorsement requirements and expectations to all teachers and administrators (e.g., math, ESL, science).

Family Involvement in School

Districts and schools provide effective guidance that involves families, to the extent practicable, in students' learning and adult literacy.

- Facilitate family literacy programs connected to the school (e.g., family literacy centers, community education programs, online learning).
- Provide families with support to increase their understanding of school governance systems and school/student expectations (e.g., graduation requirements, behavior expectations, attendance policies, residential transitional programs, school culture).
- Provide parents with meaningful and comprehensible information about their student's learning progress, expectations, schoolwork, and other relevant school information in an ongoing and consistent manner.
- Communicate, in the language parents can understand, information specific to their student's needs (e.g., financial assistance, translation and interpretation for due process procedures, accelerated programs, extended learning opportunities).
- Provide coaching for families to be effective mentors/tutors with access to bilingual and other instructional materials and resources.
- Encourage and accommodate families to participate in the classroom.
- Develop and implement mechanisms to increase participation in parent conferences.
- Encourage the participation of ELL families on school councils and committees.
- Encourage families to reflect and conduct dialogue with others to attain cultural proficiency.

Families actively engage in their students' learning.

- Communicate the learning needs of their students to the school administration and faculty.
- Initiate and participate in open and active communication specific to student learning and achievement.
- Understand the joint responsibility for students' education.
- Support school achievement and educational efforts by participating in school conferences.
- Engage family members in educational activities at home by utilizing bilingual and other instructional materials and resources.
- Structure a learning environment to support schoolwork at home.
- Create, and engage students in, enjoyable learning activities.
- Read to students, and listen to students read.
- Participate on the school community council, and in volunteer opportunities and classroom activities that are accepting and accommodating of diverse cultures.

Community Involvement

Districts, schools, and communities will establish and maintain active and productive partnerships to create positive learning environments.

Communities will actively engage in partnerships.

- Collaborate with schools, public libraries, community centers, and other interested organizations to extend learning beyond the regular school day (see appendix).
- Engage schools in local cultural activities and community events.
- Develop active, culturally responsive communication with community members regarding their role in education as partners to encourage student learning.
- Form collaborative partnerships with higher education to improve student achievement.

Districts and schools will engage in active and productive partnerships with underrepresented communities.

- Establish policies and opportunities for active community involvement.
- Collaborate with community organizations to implement and fund family liaisons to actively engage and support families of ELLs (see appendix).
- Engage communities in the planning, writing, and implementation of grants.

To view a list of community organizations please go to the following web site:

http://www.schools.utah.gov/equity/CMAC/ethnic_community_based_lists.htm

Data Information and Program Effectiveness

Implement ongoing and open data sharing across all programs and stakeholders. Adhere to accountability requirements of Utah Performance Assessment System for Students (U-PASS) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in a timely manner, with an explanation of data for all stakeholders. Conduct ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of ELL Master Plan programs.

Provide the appropriate data to stakeholders.

- Provide teachers with appropriate student information to make instructional decisions.
- Provide data for purposes of research and evaluation through a system of data access and institutional review boards.
- Maintain data management systems and software for retrieval of information.
- Utilize academic English language acquisition assessments to monitor student progress and inform the effectiveness of language acquisition programs.
- Use ELL assessment data appropriately to monitor student achievement.
- Provide data to assess effectiveness of instruction.

Provide meaningful and useful information on the performance of ELLs, including trends in student performance.

- Provide parents, teachers, and administrators with individual student data in a meaningful and useful form.
- Provide information to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Partner with researchers to produce reports, evaluations, and meaningful information for policymakers, advocacy groups, districts, schools, and families.
- Establish long-term information communication systems to monitor trends and policy impact.

Establish statewide partnerships with external, third-party research and evaluation organizations to establish the effectiveness of the ELL Master Plan.

- Utilize appropriate formative and summative evaluations correctly.
- Determine the extent to which the plan's goals are achieved.
- Recommend changes to achieve plan objectives.
- Establish specific guidelines and criteria for teacher effectiveness and adherence.
- Conduct both quantitative and qualitative formative evaluation, and communicate findings to adjust implementation.
- Provide resources to conduct longitudinal studies of the efficacy of ELL programs in Utah.
- Provide meaningful guidance to inform policy decisions.

Alternative Language Services Guidance Document

The Utah State Office of Education provides a statewide Alternative Language Services guidance document to support district English Language Learner (ELL) programs.
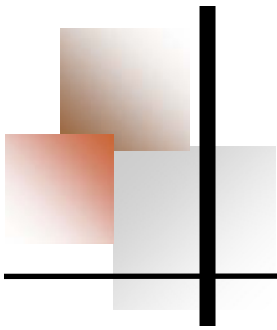
- Delineate state/federal assurances/requirements from highly recommended practices.
- Establish and describe effective identification of student needs, instruction, and assessment to improve student learning.
- Establish, describe, and communicate appropriate accommodations for effective instruction and assessment.
- Communicate policies, research, guidance, best practices, and the Board Rule (R-277-716) specific to ELLs.
- Serve as a tool for districts to share successful practices with each other.
- Provide the guidance document to stakeholders and solicit effective dialogue for needed improvement.

Local Educational Agencies use the document to improve instruction and inform ELL programs.

- Encourage schools to implement the document's guidance and requirements in such a manner as to improve student success in ELL programs.
- Implement professional development to provide research-based instructional practices that enhance academic achievement.
- Provide resources and training to implement the guidance document.
- Communicate goals, plans, and procedures to parents through information written in a language that parents will understand to the extent practicable.
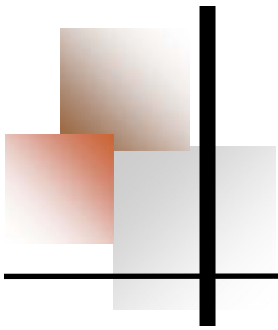
Schools use the guidance document to improve ELL academic achievement.

- Utilize the templates and letters in the document to provide consistent communication with parents and students.
- Adhere to assurances, requirements, and best educational practices.
- Planning of best practices and research-based instruction.
- Guide compliance with state and federal requirements for ELL programs.

Glossary

Accommodation   Adapting language (spoken or written) to make it more understandable to second language learners. In assessment, accommodations may be made to the presentation, response method, setting, or timing/scheduling of the assessment.

ALS   Alternative Language Services (ALS) means language services designed to meet the educational needs of all language minority students so that students are able to participate effectively in the regular instruction program.

Best educational practices   Best practices are innovative, creative, and effective approaches to teaching and learning that show evidence of bringing about improvement or success.

Culture   The total shared way of a given people. This comprises modes of thinking, acting, law, language, art, and customs, and also material products such as a house, clothes, and tools.

Cultural competency   The ability of people of one culture to understand and feel comfortable with the cultures of other people.

Cultural learning patterns   Cultural learning patterns are exhibited by groups of people who are part of a collective. These patterns are not frozen or static, but open to exceptions, since many individuals have learning patterns that are not shared by their collective group.

Cultural relevancy   A method of teaching and learning that builds on and values the cultural experiences and knowledge of all participants, regardless of whether they are from the dominant culture.

Cultural responsiveness   The capacity to know and connect with the actual lived experience, personhood, and learning modalities of the students.

CRT   Criterion-Referenced Tests assess the knowledge and skills of students in grades 1-11 in the areas of reading, writing, and listening, as outlined in the Utah Core Curriculum.

Dialogue   Dialogue is used to enable people, usually in small groups, to share their perspectives and experiences about difficult issues. Dialogue is not about judging, weighing, or making decisions, but about understanding and learning. Dialogue dispels stereotypes, builds trust, and enables people to be open to perspectives that are very different from their own.

Differentiated   A teaching theory based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms. To differentiate instruction is to recognize students' varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, and interests, and to react responsively.

Dual language   Educational program which enables students to develop fluency and literacy in two languages, attain high academic achievement in both languages, gain understanding and appreciation of their own and other cultures, and develop positive self-esteem. This program is designed to serve both the language minority and language majority student. The goal of the program is for both groups to become biliterate.

Glossary

Due process   The principle that the government must normally respect all of a person's legal rights (instead of just some or most of those legal rights) when the government deprives a person of life, liberty, or property. This includes an individual's right to be adequately notified of charges or proceedings involving him or her, and the opportunity to be heard at these proceedings.

Efficacy   The ability to produce a desired amount of a desired effect.

ELL   An English Language Learner (ELL) is broadly defined as a student who:
- Has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language that it may interfere with the student's opportunity to learn successfully in the classrooms where the language of instruction is English; OR
- Whose native language is a language other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; OR
- Is a Native American/American Indian or Alaskan Native who comes from an environment where a language other than English has a significant impact on the student's level of English language proficiency.

ESL   English as a Second Language (ESL) is an educational approach in which limited-English-proficient students are instructed in the use of the English language. Instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language, focuses on language (as opposed to content), and is usually taught during specific school periods. For the rest of the school day, students may be placed in mainstream classrooms, an immersion program, or a bilingual classroom.

MESA   Math, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA) is a program that encourages underrepresented students to participate in math, science, and engineering activities.

REACH   Respecting Ethnic and Cultural Heritage (REACH) is a multicultural awareness program that provides educators with an effective strategy to infuse multicultural concepts into existing lesson plans in order to foster an inclusive environment that embraces culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Reflection   A process that allows people to make careful considerations about what their experiences are all about: what they saw, who they met, why there is a need for a certain service, etc. The act of reflection serves as the bridge between experiences and learning.

Scaffolding   An instructional technique whereby the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task, then gradually shifts responsibility to the students.

Stakeholders   People who are (or might be) affected by any action taken by an organization or group; any group or individual who can affect or who is affected by achievement of a group's objectives. Examples of stakeholders in education would be teachers, administrators, students, parents, community organizations, state and local board members, legislators, etc.

"Teacher, They Called Me a___!"   *"Teacher, They Called Me a ___!": Confronting Prejudice and Discrimination in the Classroom.* An activity guide for teachers to help raise children's level of awareness, understanding and tolerance of difference.

Appendix 1: Instructional Support

Pre-K
Establish a coordinated effort to provide clear expectations for kindergarten readiness.

- Establish a pre-K initiative to provide support to districts to improve existing pre-K programs and provide parents with support to ready children for school.
- Establish extended-day kindergarten in targeted high-poverty schools and provide communication and coordination of existing programs.
- Communicate to every family the expectations for school readiness through the state pre-K guidelines.
- Support high-quality early childhood programs that contain the following components: early childhood-certificated staff; developmentally appropriate curriculum that addresses the social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs of the child; and small class size.

Elementary (K-6)
Establish a coordinated effort to provide clear expectations for student achievement in the primary grades.

- Implement consistent statewide placement and assessment.
- Establish extended-day kindergarten in targeted high-poverty schools and provide communication and coordination of existing programs.
- Use extended-day classes to provide supplemental and/or additional ESL classes (e.g., support in the content area, study skills support, help with navigating the system.)
- Assist with integration into a regular school setting.
- Support in L1 (native language) could be provided by paraprofessionals or teachers.
- Actively identify, place, and develop support systems for ELLs in accelerated learning programs.

Secondary (7-12)
Establish a coordinated effort to provide clear expectations for academic achievement and high school graduation.

- Implement consistent statewide placement and assessment.
- Develop ESL high school courses to meet graduation requirements (e.g., Prep-a-Net [Electronic High School], focus on content area through sheltered instruction strategies, credit recovery).
- Use extended-day classes to provide supplemental and/or additional ESL classes (e.g., content area and study skills support, help with navigating the system acculturation).
- Assist with integration into regular school setting.
- Support in L1 (native language) could be provided by paraprofessionals or teachers.
- Formulate transition plans for ELLs from high school to post-secondary education or the workplace.
- Actively recruit and develop support systems for ELLs in academically advanced courses (e.g., honors; Advanced Placement; Achievement Via Individual Development [AVID]; Project Lead the Way; concurrent enrollment; Math, Engineering and Science Achievement [MESA].

Appendix 1: Instructional Support

Establish a coordinated effort to provide appropriate services to ELLs who have special needs.

Advanced Learners
- Identify ELLs using culturally appropriate measurements.
- Evaluate the success of recruitment and retention of ELLs in advanced programs.

Special Education
- Monitor over-and under-identification of ELLs in special education programs.
- Use culturally appropriate measurements to identify and evaluate students.

Refugee Students
- Provide professional development that addresses the needs of specific groups of refugee students enrolled in each school.
- Provide intense academic and culturally sensitive opportunities to accelerate their learning to facilitate graduation.
- Provide the strategies to support students acquiring basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) in English.

Migrant/Seasonal Students
- Provide professional development that addresses the needs of specific groups of migrant/ seasonal students enrolled in each school.
- Provide intense academic and culturally sensitive opportunities to accelerate their learning to facilitate graduation.
- Monitor mobility and track individual student progress.

Young Parents Program
- Develop ESL high school courses to meet graduation requirements.
    - Prep-a-Net (Electronic High School)
    - Focus on content area through sheltered instruction strategies
    - Credit Recovery
- Formulate transition plans for ELLs from high school to post-secondary education or the workplace.
- Provide prenatal and parenting skills that are culturally relevant.

Family Literacy
- Provide resources for ELL adult learners to learn English and complete high school graduation requirements as needed.
- Develop a network to disseminate information to adult learners.
- Engage families in the instructional process.

Appendix 2: Acknowledgements

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A Design for Excellence

Alternative Language Services Guidance Document

This document will be posted on the
Utah State Office of Education website
upon completion.
www.schools.utah.gov/curr